

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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S E C R E T BUENOS AIRES 8179

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS FROM AMBASSADOR HILL

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XM

SUBJECT: SUGGESTIONS FOR BETTERING RELATIONS WITHIN LATIN
AMERICA WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON ARGENTINA

REF: STATE 282526

1. AS INDICATED IN THE RECENT CASP, THE TURMOIL AND UNCERTAINTY THROUGH WHICH ARGENTINA IS NOW PASSING DICTATE A LOW US PROFILE. IT IS NOT A GOOD TIME FOR MAJOR INITIATIVES IN US ARGENTINE RELATIONS. WE ARE IN SOMETHING OF A HOLDING PATTERN UNTIL WE CAN FORESEE THE LIKELY OUTCOME OF EVENTS HERE. THIS HOLDING ACTION, HOWEVER, DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE SHOULD SIMPLY WRITE ARGENTINA OFF. IT IS A COUNTRY WITH GREAT POTENTIAL, AND COULD BE AN ENORMOUS BREAD BASKET IF ITS RESOURCES WERE PROPERLY UTILIZED. I WOULD THEREFORE URGE THAT THE WORKING GROUPS IN WASHINGTON AND HERE SHOULD GO FORWARD. WE SHOULD, FOR EXAMPLE, CONTINUE TO WORK TOWARD EXPANSION OF US-ARGENTINE TRADE, WITH OUR PRINCIPAL EFFORTS FOCUSED IN THESE WORKING GROUPS.

2. IN ANY CASE WE SHOULD NOT RPT NOT GIVE THE ARGENTINES THE IMPRESSION THAT BECAUSE OF THEIR ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS, WE NO LONGER COUNT THEM AMONG THE IMPORTANT, OR KEY, COUNTRIES OF LATIN

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AMERICA.

3. ONE POSITIVE ACTION WE COULD TAKE WOULD BE TO EXPAND THE FLOW OF VISITORS IN BOTH DIRECTIONS. MANY ARGENTINES IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS KNOW ALL TOO LITTLE ABOUT THE US. WE SHOULD THEREFORE ENCOURAGE MORE HIGH-LEVEL VISITORS FROM ARGENTINA AND EXPAND OUR EXCHANGE PROGRAM GENERALLY. AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME, MOREOVER, I WOULD HOPE WE COULD ENCOURAGE THE EXCHANGE OF CONGRESSIONAL VISITS FROM BOTH HOUSES.

4. FINALLY, WITH RESPECT TO THE REST OF THE HEMISPHERE AS WELL AS TO ARGENTINA, I WOULD SUGGEST THAT WE BEGIN NOW TO MAP OUT A SERIES OF PRESIDENTIAL VISITS AS WELL AS VISITS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE, SECRETARY OF TREASURY, AND PERHAPS OTHER CABINET OFFICERS. THESE NEED NOT TAKE PLACE IMMEDIATELY BUT SHOULD BE CAREFULLY PLANNED AND SPACED OVER THE FOUR YEAR PRESIDENTIAL TERM.
HILL

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